



# REAL PROPERTY REGISTRY & VACANT PROPERTY REGISTRY FAQs

## Real Property Registry

### 1. What is a real property registry (RPR)?

The RPR would require all property owners to register their property or properties with the City, even if the property is not vacant and designate an individual(s) as the primary contact (s).

### 2. What is the purpose of the RPR?

The purpose is to ensure that important legal documents that may be sent from the City reach the true owner of the property. In many cases, owners fail to receive important correspondence because someone else lives at or manages the property.

### 3. How long will it take to register my property?

***Literally seconds.*** When you receive your property tax notice in the mail, you will be asked to check a box verifying that you are the owner and that your information is correct. If you are not the owner, then simple instructions will be provided for contacting the City and making the necessary changes.

### 4. If the City is sending a property tax bill, don't you already know who the owner is?

Logically, yes. However, the reality is that many properties are managed by individuals or companies who receive the property tax bill. Other properties are part of complex real estate investments or transactions that make it quite difficult to know who actually is responsible for the property.

### 5. Can I avoid being listed as the owner?

Yes. Every owner has the option to designate another party of entity as his or her agent. What this means is that you are agreeing that all legal correspondence regarding your property will be sent to your agent. In the event there is a code violation with your property, your agent will be receive notice and be responsible for notifying you. You won't be able argue you didn't receive notice or were unaware of the problem.

### 6. What if I choose not to register?

A person who chooses not register will receive notice and may be charged an administrative fee of \$200. However, the person has 45 days to register after failing to comply with the original request. If registered within 45 days, there will be no administrative fee assessed.

## **Vacant Property Registry**

### **7. What is a vacant property registry (VPR)?**

The VPR requires the mortgage holder of single family residential property or condominiums upon notice of 1) Vacancy; 2) Abandonment and 3) Tax Delinquency to register the property within 30 days of notification.

### **8. Who will notify the mortgage holder that the property is vacant?**

The City will notify the mortgage holder by sworn affidavit from a City of Memphis Housing Code Official.

### **9. What is the purpose of the VPR?**

***The VPR has one over-riding purpose and that is to prevent and attack blight in our community.*** In the struggling economy, many houses have been abandoned, foreclosed or simply allowed to deteriorate. The City spends millions in tax dollars trying to clean up blighted properties because the owner is unknown and cannot be held accountable. It is estimated that there are more than 43,000 blighted properties in the City of Memphis.

### **10. What are the benefits of the VPR?**

It has been well-documented that blight leads to crime, lower property values and numerous safety and health concerns. To the extent that the VPR can help to clean up blighted properties and hold owners accountable for maintaining their properties, crime should drop and property values in our neighborhoods should climb.

### **11. Is a VPR legal?**

**Yes.** Tennessee Code Annotated 6-54-113 gives the City or its designee the right to establish a registry for ***all*** real property located within the City boundaries.

### **12. What if a mortgage holder does not register?**

A mortgage holder who chooses not register may be subject to administrative fees of \$50 per day until the property is properly registered.

### **13. Is there a fee for the mortgage holder to register a vacant property?**

Yes. The mortgage holder must pay a \$200 administrative fee for each vacant property. Because the property is vacant it is more susceptible to vandalism and code violations. This fee helps defray the City's cost of monitoring and intervening in relation to problems at the property.